

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on May 19.

**Message to the Congress  
Transmitting the Notice of  
Continuation of the National  
Emergency With Respect to Burma**  
*May 18, 1999*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the emergency declared with respect to Burma is to continue in effect beyond May 20, 1999.

As long as the Government of Burma continues its policies of committing large-scale repression of the democratic opposition in Burma, this situation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to maintain in force these emergency authorities beyond May 20, 1999.

**William J. Clinton**

The White House,  
May 18, 1999.

**Remarks on Departure for  
New York City**  
*May 19, 1999*

**Reauthorization of the Elementary and  
Secondary Education Act**

Good morning. I'm delighted to be joined this morning by the Secretary of Education and by my Domestic Policy Adviser, Bruce Reed, to discuss the very important issue of our children's schools.

In my State of the Union Address this year, I said that in order to meet our responsibility to create 21st century schools for all our chil-

dren, we have to do a far, far better job of spending the \$15 billion in Federal aid we send to our schools every year.

Building these kinds of schools has been a passion for me, for the Vice President, for Secretary Riley, for our entire administration. We have worked with Members of Congress and education leaders, people in every State of the country, for over 6 years now. We have supported higher standards, better teachers, new technology, modern facilities, innovations like charter schools, character education, school uniforms.

But we know fundamentally that if we are going to change the way our schools work, we must change the way we invest Federal aid in our schools.

On the way down here, just down the walk, the Secretary of Education said we have been working very hard to promote school standards around the country; now we have to get the standards actually into the schools. This week I am sending legislation to Congress designed to do just that.

First, this legislation strengthens accountability for results. It says that States and school districts that choose to accept Federal aid must take responsibility for turning around failing schools, or shutting them down. It says they must give parents report cards not just on their children but on the children's schools. It says school districts must have strong discipline codes that are fair, consistent, and focused on prevention. It says they must make sure that teachers actually know the subjects they are teaching. It says they must stop the practice of social promotion, not by holding students back but by making sure they have the support to meet the higher standards.

This legislation triples funding for after-school and summer school programs, provides for smaller classes, and requires other early interventions that lift students up.

Second, this legislation will put more highly trained teachers in our Nation's schools. It requires that all new teachers pass subject matter and skills tests, that all teachers be given the support they need to improve their knowledge and skills. It allows Congress to finish the job we started last fall of hiring 100,000 new, highly trained teachers to reduce class size in the early grades.

Finally, the legislation will help give all our children safe, healthy, and disciplined learning environments. For the first time, it will require schools to adopt comprehensive school safety plans, use proven antidrug and antiviolence prevention programs, intervene with troubled youth, establish security procedures for schools, and give parents an annual report of drug and violent incidents at their children's schools.

It also expands the character education efforts the Secretary of Education has done so much to advance, promotes alternative schools for disruptive students, and strengthens our policy of zero tolerance for guns by requiring that any student expelled for bringing a gun to school receive appropriate treatment and counseling before being allowed back into class.

As I said yesterday, we must do everything we can to keep guns out of the hands of our children. I want to commend the Senate for yesterday's overwhelming, bipartisan support for child safety locks. And I commend Speaker Hastert for his leadership in supporting background checks at gun shows and for raising the age of handgun ownership to 21. I urge the Senate to keep working on the justice bill—the juvenile justice bill—and to bring these commonsense measures to a vote.

Now, these education ideas are not Democratic or Republican, nor were they dreamed up in Washington. They were invented and proven successful in the laboratories of democracy at the school, city, and State levels. They preserve and enhance the flexibility that States and districts need to run successful schools. If the Federal Government fails to act, the best of these practices will spread, but much more slowly. Just remember, it took 100 years for laws mandating universal education to spread from a few States to every State. That pace of change might have been all right in the 19th century; it won't do in the 21st. We do not have the luxury of waiting and continuing to subsidize failure.

Nothing we can do will more surely unite our people and strengthen our Nation than giving all of our children a high-quality education. We know what works. Our schools, our educators have shown us what works. It is time to put that as a condition of success

in the investment of Federal aid in every child in America. And I want to thank the Secretary of Education and Mr. Reed and everyone else who has worked on this program.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:40 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

### **Remarks at the Launching of the Pennsylvania Station Redevelopment Corporation in New York City**

*May 19, 1999*

Thank you very much. Chairman Gargano, Governor, Secretary Slater, thank you all for all you have done to make this day come to pass. I thank the leaders of Amtrak, the MTA, the Port Authority, the Post Office; Mr. Peck, the Commissioner of Public Buildings; the distinguished architect who has drawn a beautiful plan. Speaker Vallone, Mr. Green, Senator D'Amato, thank you for pushing this. And Mrs. Moynihan, you haven't yet been acknowledged, but you had a lot to do with the arm twisting on this, and I thank you, too. Thank you very much.

Senator Moynihan has been called the Nation's best thinker among politicians since Lincoln, and its best politician among thinkers since Jefferson. Today we might say he also may be the best arm twister since Farley. *[Laughter]* You know, it was said that Jim Farley actually knew the names of 50,000 people by heart. Pat Moynihan knows 50,000 ways to get any politician to do what he wants. *[Laughter]*

I cannot tell you how much I appreciate the fact that he gave me an opportunity to be a small part of this day and this project. For decades he has worked to give voice to the dreams of New Yorkers, to create a new Penn Station truly worthy of the name and of this wonderful city.

If I can borrow a few words from the famous inscription on this building: Neither snow, nor rain, nor heat, nor gloom of night could have stopped Pat Moynihan from bringing this day to pass.

Throughout his public career, which has spanned so many different jobs in so many different places in the United States and

abroad, Senator Moynihan has always cared about preserving our history and our spirit through our great buildings. Nearly 40 years ago, President Kennedy challenged him to revitalize Washington's Pennsylvania Avenue, to bring back civic pride to the heart of our Nation's Capital. He never gave up on that goal, a job he completed with the dedication of the Ronald Reagan Building a year ago this month.

Thirty-five years ago, when I went to Washington, DC, for the first time as a wide-eyed college student, Pennsylvania Avenue was a mess and a disaster. Today, it is a tribute to our history, to our values, and to our future, thanks to the vision of Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

Many people also forget that in addition to helping to rescue Union Station in Washington and Grand Central Station here—which he was whispering in my ear about while we were waiting for our turn—back in 1962 he authored the wise principles that guide the Federal Government's architecture decisions today. In the words of your distinguished architect, David Childs, Senator Moynihan is a true inspiration to everyone working in architecture and urban design.

This latest project also, as he and others have said, is an example of how this Senator and his allies have also fundamentally changed the way we invest in transportation. He has secured vast resources not simply for concrete and for mass transit, but for communities, for historic preservation, and for advanced technologies to meet the 21st century needs of America.

I thank him and Senator D'Amato and Secretary Slater for fighting to see that we did not turn the transportation bill in Washington into just another road-building bill, without any concerns for the needs of urban America and others who need mass transit, intermodal transportation, and a broader vision of how we will reconcile our desire to have livable, sustainable communities and to get around in a hurry. He did that, along with the others, and I thank them all. New York can be very, very proud of every one of them.

Let me finally say that this Penn Station—I was astonished by how brief Senator Moynihan was, but I noticed that the closer he

comes to getting his way, the shorter his speeches get. *[Laughter]* Back in '93, when he first talked to me about it, I got the whole load of wax, man. *[Laughter]* I knew everybody—I knew the people who had planted the explosives on Penn Station in the '60s. *[Laughter]* I knew the whole history of the thing. And as we made progress, you know, his words became fewer as his satisfaction increased. But I think it's worth noting that this journey to this moment has not only been a public service, but a point of personal pride for this quintessential New Yorker and American.

Senator Moynihan grew up in this neighborhood, shined shoes around the corner. As a young ensign, he used to fall asleep in the rooms off Penn Station's grand ticketing hall as he waited for his train back to Norfolk. Grand public buildings like the old Penn Station and the New York Public Library became like home, especially for a boy whose family kept moving to a new apartment just about every year.

I tell you this story not only to capture what this journey must mean for him but to remind us of the fundamental significance of our great public buildings. Because whether you are a wealthy industrialist or just a person with a few dollars to your name, you can feel ennobled, as people did—ordinary citizens and great ones alike—in the old glass and steel cathedral that was Penn Station. People without tickets could come to the old Penn Station in the afternoon just to dream about what it would be like to get on the train, and watching the crowds go by.

When I was a young man, I used to go to train stations and watch people and wonder what they were doing, where they were going, and I always felt better when I walked out than when I walked in. I'll bet nearly everybody here has had a similar experience.

Now, Mr. Childs' design is not intended to replicate the old Penn Station, but it will have, as you see, the same stunning effect for everyone. Here in this beautiful McKim, Mead, and White building the Postal Service has graciously now agreed to share, this design will take the best elements of the past and create a remarkable station for the future.

Of course, there will be some hurdles—the environmental and historic preservation requirements, which I’m quite certain will be met—but the other hurdle is money. One of Clinton’s laws of politics is, if someone stands up and shakes his finger and says to you, “this is not a money problem” he is almost always talking about someone else’s problem. *[Laughter]* I want to do what I can to help close the funding gap. I will ask the Congress to increase the Federal commitment to this project by \$60 million over the next 3 years.

As a tribute to Senator Moynihan, and because it’s the right thing to do, I hope that Members in both parties, in both Houses, will join with me to secure this funding. We’re not quite there yet. Others will have to do more as well. But if we all do our part, we can honor one of the first great buildings of the 20th century and create the first great public building of the 21st century. In so doing, New York once again can provide a model for the entire Nation.

The First Lady and I have worked very hard to help communities to honor the past and preserve it as part of our gift to the new millennium. Just today she awarded the first Save America’s Treasures grants, to help meet urgent preservation needs across our Nation, from conserving the second largest collection of Thomas Jefferson’s personal correspondence, to restoring Martin Luther King, Jr.’s, Ebenezer Baptist Church.

I know our Nation is still young, and sometimes still we lose sight of the enormous value of the history that is embodied in our buildings, our documents, our artifacts, our monuments. We must do better in preserving the past, and in building new buildings and monuments which capture our vision of the future, the enduring commitment we have to our freedom, and the public space that makes community more possible, and reminds us of our common humanity across all the lines that divide us.

That is what this building will do. I hope at this moment of great prosperity and optimism for the United States, we will use the example of this project to redouble our determination to build great buildings and dream big dreams for the future.

Again, I want to thank all of you who never gave up on this ambitious project. I want to urge you never to give up on it until it is completely finished. And on behalf of Senator Moynihan, Senator D’Amato, myself, and all others who will be out of office when it is finally done, I hope you’ll invite us to the building dedication.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. at the James A. Farley Building. In his remarks, he referred to Charles A. Gargano, chairman of the board, Pennsylvania Station Redevelopment Corporation; Gov. George E. Pataki of New York; architect David Childs; Peter F. Vallone, New York City council speaker; Mark Green, New York City public advocate; former Senator Alfonse M. D’Amato; and Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s wife, Elizabeth.

### **Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Luncheon in New York City**

*May 19, 1999*

Thank you very much. First of all, I want to say a real thank you to Jack and to Phyllis for having us here. I’ve been in their home in New Jersey; I’ve never been here before, and I wanted to come. And as you can see from the pictures on the wall, the Vice President has been here. *[Laughter]* And I’ve been rather jealous of this. *[Laughter]* To say this is an interesting house would be an understatement. *[Laughter]* And I’m just delighted to be here. And I thank them for opening their home to us.

I also want to thank Gerry Ferraro for being here. And Congressman Kostmayer, thank you for being here. And I want to thank Joe Andrew and Beth Dozoretz and Fran Katz and everybody at the DNC for the work they’ve done.

You know, Joe and I, we just finished a western swing; Joe and Beth and I, we’ve been out on the west coast. And about every time he got up to introduce me, he said, “You know, we’re going to win every election from the White House to dogcatcher.” And I keep pointing out to him that that is not such a great distance. *[Laughter]* He acts like that’s such an encompassing term, you know.

[Laughter] He hasn't been paying attention to Washington lately. [Laughter]

But let me say, I just came—a lot of you know this, but I just came from a remarkable event with Senator Moynihan and the Governor and a lot of the transportation authorities here. We announced new plans for the new Penn Station and the old Farley Post Office Building. And a lot of you—you probably saw, the last day or 2, the New York Times had a nice piece on the architectural plans and what was going to be done. But this is something that Pat Moynihan talked to me about way back in '93. And I also announced that we were going to put \$60 million in our budget over the next 3 years to help pay more of the Federal share to build this. But I wanted to sort of use it as a metaphor for the point I want to make here.

For whatever reason, I think nearly everybody who has been involved in this project has been captured by the idea of it. And most everybody with any sense of the past at all deeply regrets the fact that the old Penn Station was destroyed and, with it, a lot of memories of New York and of magnificent architectural creation.

And so anyway, this little project, it was like a lot of Pat Moynihan's ideas. It was a little bit ahead of its time, and it took a while to catch hold. But I signed on early and told him to just call me back when there was something to do.

And so slowly it sort of picked up steam and people kind of got together. So we announced it today, and everybody felt so good about it. And I was trying to think to myself why they felt so good about it. I think it's because it captures the past and it also throws people into the future in a way they feel good about, because beautiful public spaces really help us to build a community across all the lines that divide us; maybe because nearly everybody alive can remember sometime in his or her life, maybe when we were all much younger and had more free time, when we were sitting in a train station just watching people go by, felt free and kind of elevated by it.

But I say that because, to me, what I've tried to do for the United States is to give us a sense that we could meet all our challenges but that we had to meet them to-

gether. That meant that everybody had a role to play and some citizen responsibility. It also means that with all of our diversity, which ought to be celebrated, not just tolerated but celebrated, we have to realize that what binds us together is even more important.

And the story of the last 6 years has been an effort to try to take the ideas that I developed over a long period of time and that I developed a belief in, and that I talked to the American people about in '92 and again in '96, and turn those ideas into policies that then could be made real in the lives of the American people.

And I'm very grateful for the good things that have happened in this country. But I came here today to say to you that for whatever role I played in it, I think the far more important contributing factor was that we had the right ideas, rooted in the right vision of America, and we had a good team and we showed up for work every day. And we intend to continue doing it down to the last day.

That elicited a few laughs, but anybody that's ever watched any national capital in politics knows that it's no small achievement to get your team to show up for work every day, because an enormous amount of time and energy is always devoted to trying to divide your team and distract them and wonder who's dropping the dime on whom in the morning paper, so they won't work. Instead, they'll spend all their time calling each other names or being torn up and upset or worrying about something other than the people's business.

So I am here today because for whatever role I have played in this, I know the most important thing was that we had the right vision and the right ideas, and we brought teamwork, and we showed up for work every day. And we need to keep doing that. And America needs to make that decision again. And every time you give the people a chance to have a referendum on whether they want politics to be about politicians and the politics of personal destruction or whether they want it to be about people and progress and unity, they always make the right choice. But you have to put the choice before them which means we need good candidates and

they have to be adequately financed, and we have to keep the message out there.

The other point I'd like to make rather briefly is that I think it's quite important for us, even though we have now reached a point where Presidential elections almost take 2 years, which I think is wrong—I actually—I announced in October of '91, 13 months before the election. And that was a short campaign. I waged a short campaign. But I think it's very important, particularly for the Democrats, because we have been the party of vision and progress and of trying to pull the country together and not drive wedges among the people—it's particularly important for us to keep working, to keep working, to keep producing.

There are things which won't wait until 2001. For example, Jack mentioned that we'd balanced the budget, and we now have the biggest surplus ever. I have offered the Congress a plan that would save Social Security and Medicare and actually pay the publicly held debt of the United States down to its lowest point since before World War I in 15 years.

Now, why do I think that's a good idea? Because I think it will keep interest rates lower and investment higher and create more jobs and raise incomes. It will also make us relatively less dependent on international capital markets at a time when I am doing my very best to stabilize them, so we don't have another Asian financial crisis, and we don't have to worry about spending an enormous amount of money to keep it from spreading to Brazil or all the things that those of you in finance know we have been working on the last 2 years.

But I can't say for sure what will happen 10 years from now. I can say for sure, 10 years from now, that if we have a terrible recession and we have to deficit spend, it will be a lot better to do it if we've got a much lower debt base than we have. I can say for sure that if there's another round of global turmoil 10 years from now, we'll be much more immune to it if we've got a smaller debt and our interest rate structures are smaller.

So these are important things. We need to do them now. We don't need to be waiting around. We need to continue our efforts at educational excellence. Today I introduced

a bill into Congress—I announced it just before I came up here—every 5 years we have to reauthorize the general bill by which we give Federal money to public schools in New York and everywhere else. It's called the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. By and large, this money is given to help schools that have a lot of poor kids or a lot of kids whose first language is not English or a lot of kids who have special needs—disabilities—their targeted aid. And a lot of it is given to provide for other kind of special purposes, technology in the schools and things like that.

None of it, however, is related to results. I have been working for 6 years to get everybody to embrace the idea that we had to have standards and accountability, and we ought to do a better job making sure teachers know the subjects they're teaching and all this. But we've never really been able to move these standards into the schools. So it's basically—whether they're being observed or not is a function of the character of the local leadership or the commitment of the local political leadership or the State leadership.

We now have a chance to actually change the way schools work. If we say, okay, for the next 5 years we're going to take all the research that has been done and take the uncontestable findings and make the pursuit of those findings a condition of the money—no social promotion but don't say the kids are failures; give them all summer school or after-school programs—this works. Identify the schools that are failing and turn them around or close them down, let the kids go some place else. Have charter schools, have districtwide school choice. Do something to give the kids other choices.

Those are just a couple of examples of the kinds of things that I think we have to do. We also—I have to tell you, though, it's not—the Federal Government and others are going to have to find a way to put more money into teaching because we're going to have a 2-million teacher shortage the next decade, with more kids coming into the schools.

Now, we already have too many teachers out there, teaching science and math courses,

especially, for which they have not been academically prepared, and in which they, themselves, have not passed performance exams. So it's all very well—we've got to invest more money in this, and we've got to be more flexible about getting people into teaching in all kinds of ways that actually know the subjects we expect them to teach.

So these are some of the things that are in this bill. I think this is quite important. This could have a lot to do with what America looks like 10 years from now. If we can't give—everybody knows we've got the best higher education system in the world and, relatively speaking, a higher percentage of people going into colleges than other countries. No one seriously believes that we're giving all of our kids the best elementary and secondary education in the world. And until we can do that, we won't be able to take full advantage of this astonishing diversity in our student body.

And I think this is, by the way, a huge asset for us in the global economy, to have all these kids from all these different countries. Just go to the New York school system and look. This is a big deal. This is a plus, not a minus. This is a good thing in a global society to have this but only if we can give these kids a chance to learn what they need to know to do well in the world they will become adults in.

Let me just mention one or two other things. The aftermath—Hillary and I are going out to Littleton, Colorado tomorrow. And the aftermath of that shooting, I think, has had an even more profound impact on the country than all the school shootings last year did. And you can see it by what is happening in the Congress now. I think there is finally a feeling that it's time for everybody to stop making excuses; it's time for everybody to stop trying to place blame, and instead just basically say, "I would like to assume whatever my share of responsibility is for giving a safe childhood back to our children."

And there's something for the gun people, the entertainment people, and the Government people to do. There's also something for the school people and the parents to do, and the kids, themselves. But I would just like to make a couple of points.

Number one, the American people can take a lot of pride in the fact that in the United States Senate—that would never have passed any reasonable gun control on a bet 6 months ago—over 70 Senators last night voted to impose child trigger locks on the gun manufacturers. They voted to raise the age of handgun ownership to 21. And they voted on—I don't like the bill they voted for because it's got too many loopholes, but at least they're moving toward closing the gun show loophole.

The Speaker of the House yesterday came out for closing the gun show loophole and for raising the gun ownership age to 21. This is good. The Democrats who have been for this for years should reach out the hand across the aisle and say, "Look, this is good."

We've come a long way since 1994 when one of the principal reasons we lost the House of Representatives in the '94 election was the lobbying of the NRA against our Members who voted for the crime bill, with the Brady bill and the assault weapons ban. Ask the gentleman from Pennsylvania, he knows. We lost at least a dozen and perhaps as many as 20 seats solely because of this. This is a different country than it was then.

And the grieving of the American people for these children and the recognition that these two young men, who had gone to such a dark place in their own minds, had a Tec-9 and were making bombs, large numbers of them, I think it really registered on people. And we have a chance, therefore, to do something good.

While I was in California last weekend I told the entertainment community I thought that they should stop advertising what is violent that might be shown to kids who couldn't see the movies or rent the movies or the video games; that the advertising—people who are exposed to the advertising ought to be rated in the same way that the people who are exposed to the underlying product, and that the whole rating system ought to be reevaluated in terms of gratuitous violence.

Now, this doesn't mean that the people that manufacture guns or the people that manufacture movies or video games are personally responsible for anything. But it does mean—we know this—we know that kids are

spending more time on their own, less unsupervised time, that their parents, when they're with them, are more tired because they're often working two jobs, than at any previous time. We know this. And therefore, we know that there will be more of them who will be vulnerable.

And if that is true, and you have easier access to guns and explosives, on the one hand, and on the other hand, you have now over 300 studies that say that sustained exposure to violence—and the average 18-year-old has now seen 40,000 televised murders on movies or TV or a video screen—40,000—and we know that the vulnerable among us are made more vulnerable, then the whole mixture is a cauldron out of which some dramatically terrible things will happen.

And you don't have to blame anybody personally for this, but we all have to say, "Look, we've got to do something about this." Then I think there has to be a national grassroots campaign in every community involving religious institutions and schools and other groups patterned on what the Mothers and Students Against Drunk Driving did, patterned on the national anti-teen-pregnancy campaign—grassroots, value-based, personal contact with all these kids to try to really dramatically reduce this. And believe me, it can be done.

The last thing I'd like to say is, I've been in a lot of schools and there are—some schools do better than others with counseling programs, with peer mediation programs, with intervention programs that ultimately lead to mental health for the kids who need it, and also with just trying to set an environment in which people are encouraged to be in groups, but the groups are not encouraged to look down on one another and provoke social discord. I mean, there's a lot that can be done in the schools by the students.

And finally—a person came up to me the other day—everybody says, we need to do more to try to make it easier for parents not to lose touch with their kids. And anybody who has ever raised a child through adolescence knows that it's an interesting challenge. I mean, you want your child to become independent, to have space, to begin even to have things that aren't necessarily shared

with you. But you don't want to lose the connecting cord.

And we have—it's interesting, isn't it, that we think we should get help in education and instruction and support for everything from losing weight to improving our athletic skills, to figuring out how to use a computer to how to make money in the stock market. And yet, we don't think anybody ought to have instruction in the most important things in life. And this grassroots campaign ought to be out there helping parents to deal with the challenge of having their children come of age and get that independence they're entitled to without severing the cord that they don't want severed. This is a big deal.

And you know, our family and Al and Tipper Gore, we've worked on a lot of these issues for years and years and years. And we're going to spend a lot of time on this in the next 18 months.

The last thing I'd like to say—I'd like to say just a word about the world, because people are so interested, especially in the crisis in Kosovo now. We have tried in the last 6 years to be a force for peace, from Northern Ireland to the Middle East to Bosnia. We've tried to be a force for reducing the threat of weapons of mass destruction, and we've made a lot of progress in that and for standing up against terrorism and the emerging threats of biological and chemical weapons in the hands of organized criminals or terrorists. We've worked on all that. And we've tried to expand global prosperity through trade initiatives.

But I think it's ironic—and Jack said it at lunch, he said, "It's interesting to me, in this great, modern world we live in, we still can't figure out what to do about genocide"—since that's what World War II was really about. And I think if you think about what characterizes the modern age in a positive sense—an explosion of technology, especially in the telecommunications area; computer science increasingly being merged with the biological sciences, so that when the human genome project is completed we'll be able to get a map of—the genetic map of ourselves and our children and our grandchildren, and it should move us very rapidly over the next 15 years to another dramatic increase in life